

Khzelko #6645

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To Whom It May Concern:

As a resident of Granby, CT, I am writing to express my opposition to Raised Bill No. 6645 - "An Act Concerning Compassionate Aid in Dying for Terminally Ill Patients". Physician assisted suicide is incredibly dangerous to the medical profession and to society in general. Not only does physician assisted suicide go against the very ethics of a physician but also puts the decision of whether one lives or dies in the hands of a physician, which is not fair to the physician as this is an incredibly complex moral decision but also not a medically sound decision as a physician cannot be sure a patient is making a mentally sound decision when they are faced with terminal illness. Not only is this a decision that should not have to be made by a physician but that would also mean the physician has to determine if the patient is mentally competent enough to make such a decision, yet another aspect of this that is simply not fair to the physician in such a complex matter as terminal illness.

This will also invite lawsuits against physicians and hospitals as there will definitely be infighting among family members and questions as to whether or not the patient was mentally capable of making such a drastic decision. The American Medical Association also happens to support the opinion that physician assisted suicide is inconsistent with the ethics of physicians:

Opinion 2.211 - Physician-Assisted Suicide

Physician-assisted suicide occurs when a physician facilitates a patient's death by providing the necessary means and/or information to enable the patient to perform the life-ending act (eg, the physician provides sleeping pills and information about the lethal dose, while aware that the patient may commit suicide).

It is understandable, though tragic, that some patients in extreme duress--such as those suffering from a terminal, painful, debilitating illness--may come to decide that death is preferable to life. **However, allowing physicians to participate in assisted suicide would cause more harm than good. Physician-assisted suicide is fundamentally incompatible with the physician's role as healer, would be difficult or impossible to control, and would pose serious societal risks.**

Instead of participating in assisted suicide, physicians must aggressively respond to the needs of patients at the end of life. Patients should not be abandoned once it is determined that cure is impossible. Multidisciplinary interventions should be sought including specialty consultation, hospice care, pastoral support, family counseling, and other modalities. Patients near the end of life must continue to receive emotional support, comfort care, adequate pain control, respect for patient autonomy, and good communication. (I, IV)

The above is from: <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/physician-resources/medical-ethics/code-medical-ethics/opinion2211.page>

This bill is a danger to the medical field and society in general and should NOT be enacted into law.

Sincerely,

KZ (I would like my name to remain confidential but if you need my name or address please contact me)
Granby, CT